



**USDA-NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE ANNOUNCES
SPONSOR MEETINGS FOR EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM**

ATHENS, GA Oct. 21, 2009—James E. Tillman, Sr., State Conservationist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced today three sponsor meetings have been scheduled to assist in flood recovery efforts.

NRCS administers the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. This is a recovery program designed to assist landowners with the repair of natural resources damage caused by the epic flood of September 2009.

Meeting Locations:

November 2, 2009 1:00 p.m.

Douglas County Courthouse
Citizens' Hall Room
8700 Hospital Dr.
Douglasville, GA 30134

November 3, 2009 9:00 a.m.

Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center
2nd Floor, Conference Room A
75 Langley Drive,
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

November 3, 2009 2:30 p.m.

Walker County Commissioner's Bldg., Conference Rm.
101 South Duke St.
LaFayette, GA 30728

Technical and financial assistance is available in 23 Georgia counties. **Applications from local sponsors must be received by November 22, 2009.** Please address your correspondence to the attention of:

James E. Tillman, Sr., State Conservationist,
USDA-NRCS, 355 E. Hancock Ave., Stop 200
Athens, GA 30601

Please contact your local NRCS Office for additional information:

Bartow/Cherokee

(706) 629-2582

Carroll/Heard

(770) 832-8942

Catoosa/Walker

(706) 638-2207

Chattooga

(706) 291-5651

Cobb/ Douglas/Fulton/Paulding

(770) 792-0594

Dekalb/ Gwinnett/Rockdale

(770) 963-9288

Newton

(706) 342-1315

Helping People Help the Land

Emergency Watershed Protection Program



Georgia
October 2009

The Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program Congress has authorized the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to respond to watershed disasters by directing technical and financial assistance to landowners and administering funds through the EWP. It is designed to relieve imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms, and other natural occurrences. The purpose of EWP is to help groups of people with a common problem. It is generally not an individual assistance program. All projects undertaken must be sponsored by a political subdivision of the State, such as a city, county, or conservation district.



Eligibility

Public or private landowners, land managers and land users are eligible for assistance if their watershed area has been impaired by a natural disaster. To be eligible, applicants must lack the funds or resources necessary to provide relief. To be eligible for assistance, a measure must retard runoff to prevent soil erosion or flooding; reduce threats life or property caused by a watershed emergency; and benefit more than one individual, except in an exigency situation where single beneficiaries are permitted. The EWP program is authorized outside of the 2008 Farm Bill. Farm Bill person and land eligibility criteria, such as Adjusted Gross Income and compliance with Highly Erodible Land Conservation provisions, does not apply.

Considerations

- Applicants must apply through a project sponsor.
- Emergency work is limited to the least costly means of removing the threat.
- EWP funds can't be used to solve problems that existed before the disaster; they can't be used to raise the level of protection that existed prior to the emergency; and they can't be used to work on measures installed by another federal agency.
- EWP work must be economically and environmentally defensible and sound from an engineering standpoint. It can't adversely affect downstream water rights.
- EWP funds can't be used for operation and maintenance work or to repair private or public transportation facilities or utilities.

Sponsors

Sponsors provide the legal authority to obtain land and water rights to do repair work and secure necessary permits. Sponsors also furnish local cost sharing, install the work and provide for maintenance of completed emergency measures. Local officials of city, county and state government, Indian tribes, Soil Conservation Districts, federal agencies, watershed

authorities and others may sponsor EWP projects.

Sponsors must certify that they have the legal authority to apply for federal assistance and that they have passed a motion or adopted a similar resolution to apply for the assistance. They must provide assurance that funds are not available from other sources. Sponsors appoint a representative who will work to acquire land rights, provide additional information and obtain funds for non-exigency measures that will involve cost-sharing.

Financial Assistance

NRCS may bear up to 75 percent of the construction cost of emergency measures or up to 90 percent in limited resource areas. The remaining cost-share must come from local sources and can be in the form of cash or in-kind services.

How to Apply

The sponsor's application should be in the form of a letter signed by an official of the sponsoring organization. The letter should include the nature, location, and scope of the problem for which assistance is requested. Information (and a sample application letter) is available from NRCS offices to explain the eligibility requirements for the EWP program.

What kind of work can be done?

EWP work is not limited to any one set of prescribed measures. A case by case investigation of the needed work is made by NRCS.

EWP work can include: removing debris from stream channels, road culverts, and bridges; reshaping and protecting eroded banks; correcting damaged drainage facilities; repairing levees and structures; reseeding damaged areas; and purchasing floodplain easements.

After Restoration

NRCS and its partners continue to provide assistance to landowners after completion of restoration activities.

This assistance may be in the form of reviewing restoration measures, clarifying technical and administrative aspects of the easement and project management needs, and periodic reviews to ensure compliance with the easement deed.



Deadlines for EWP Assistance for 9/22/09 Flood Event

November 22, 2009

Application for assistance submitted to NRCS

January 22, 2010

Damage Survey Reports completed (NRCS-assisted)

For More Information or to Sign Up, Contact Your Local USDA Service Center:

Bartow and Cherokee counties

Calhoun Service Center
717 South Wall Street Suite 1
Calhoun, GA 30701-2615
Telephone: (706) 629-2582

Carroll and Heard counties

Carrollton Service Center
408 North White Street
Carrollton, GA 30117-2441
Telephone: (770) 832-8942

Catoosa and Walker counties

La Fayette Service Center
208 North Duke Street, Suite C
La Fayette, GA 30728-2505
Telephone: (706) 638-2207

Chattooga County

Rome Service Center
1401 Dean St, Dean St Plaza
Rome, GA 30161
Telephone: (706) 291-5651

Coweta County

Newnan Service Center
580-B Highway 34 East
Newnan, GA 30263
Telephone: (770) 251-4283

Crawford, Peach, and Taylor counties

Byron Service Center
1030 Peach Pkwy, Suite 4
Fort Valley, GA 31030
Telephone: (478) 827-0016

Dawson County

Gainesville Service Center
734 East Crescent Drive
Gainesville, GA 30501
Telephone: (770) 536-6981

Dooly County

Cordele Service Center
110 W. Thirteenth St
Cordele, GA 31015
Telephone: (229) 268-9106

Dekalb, Gwinnett and Rockdale counties

Lawrenceville Service Center
750 South Perry St, Suite 410
Lawrenceville, GA 30045-4828
Telephone: (770) 963-9288

Houston County

Houston Service Center
801 Main St 2nd Floor
Perry, GA 31069
Telephone: (478) 987-2280

Newton County

Madison Service Center
205 East Jefferson Street
Madison, GA 30560
Telephone: (706) 342-1315

Paulding, Cobb, Douglas and Fulton counties

Marietta Service Center
678 South Cobb Drive Southeast
Marietta, GA 30060
Telephone: (706) 792-0647

Stephens County

Toccoa Service Center
1630 Clary Connector
Eastanolle, GA 30538
Telephone: (706) 779-2134

For more information, visit www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov

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EWP in Action

An October 2005 storm in Cheshire County, New Hampshire, left this house overhanging the stream bank (above). All trees and vegetation were scoured away. Proposed action included a stone toe – earth fill with geotextiles to the top of the bank and rock bank (below).



Contact your local USDA Service Center for more information or:
www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ewp

Criteria for Assistance

All EWP work must reduce threat to life and property; be economically, environmentally, and socially defensible; and be sound from a technical standpoint.

How Do I Get Assistance?

If your land has suffered severe damage that may qualify for the EWP Program, you should contact your local authorities and request assistance. City and county governments, flood and water control districts, and soil and water conservation districts are the most common sponsors of EWP projects. More information is available from NRCS offices throughout the United States and the Caribbean and Pacific Islands areas.

NRCS may bear up to 75 percent of the construction cost of emergency measures (90 percent within limited-resource areas as identified by the U.S. Census data).

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United States Department of Agriculture
 Natural Resources Conservation Service

Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program

Implementing emergency measures to relieve imminent hazards to life and property created by natural disasters.

www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ewp



Helping People Help the Land

Emergency Watershed Protection Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** administers the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program, which responds to emergencies created by natural disasters. It is not necessary for a national emergency to be declared for an area to be eligible for assistance.



The EWP Program is a recovery effort aimed at relieving imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms, and other natural occurrences. All projects undertaken, with the exception of the purchase of floodplain easements, must have a project sponsor. NRCS may bear up to 75 percent of the construction cost of emergency measures (90 percent within limited-resource areas as identified by the U.S. Census data). The remaining costs must come from local sources and can be in the form of cash or in-kind services. Funding for the program is provided through congressional appropriations.

Type of Work Authorized

EWP is designed for installation of recovery measures to safeguard lives and property as a result of a natural disaster. Threats that the EWP Program addresses are termed watershed impairments. These include, but are not limited to:

- debris-clogged stream channels,
- undermined and unstable streambanks,
- jeopardized water control structures and public infrastructures,
- wind-borne debris removal, and
- damaged upland sites stripped of protective vegetation by fire or drought.

The program can include purchasing floodplain easements. These easements restore, protect, maintain, and enhance the functions and values of the floodplain, including associated wetlands and riparian areas. They also conserve natural values including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, flood water retention and ground water recharge, as well as safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the results of erosion.



EWP

EWP work is not limited to any one set of prescribed measures. NRCS completes a Damage Survey Report which provides a case-by-case investigation of the work necessary to repair or protect a site. NRCS will only provide funding for work that is necessary to reduce applicable threats. Should sponsors want to increase the level of protection, the sponsor will be responsible for paying 100 percent of the costs of the upgrade and additional work.

Eligibility

Public and private landowners are eligible for assistance, but must be represented by a project sponsor.

Sponsors include legal subdivisions of the State, such as a city, county, general improvement district, conservation district, or any Native American tribe or tribal organization as defined in section 4 of the Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

Sponsor's Obligations

Sponsors are responsible for:

- providing land rights to do repair work,
- securing the necessary permits,
- furnishing the local cost share,
- accomplishing the installation of work, and
- performing any necessary operation and maintenance.